WELCOME
PICTURE
PIONEERS
COOK HOUSE
FIRST ANNUAL MEETING
CANADIAN PICTURE PIONEERS
ROYAL YORK HOTEL—TORONTO
NOV. 13/1940

Canadian Picture Pioneers photographed with the Rodeo star, Gene Autry, following their Banquet at the Royal York Hotel, Toronto, on November 13th: Reading front row from left to right—Fred Pursel, H. Rotenberg, Sam Bloom, Ray Lewis, Mrs. Hanson, Sam Glazer, Tom Daley, Gene Autry, Mrs. Autry, Charles Mavety, The Johnson Sisters, Harold Patte, Jake Smith, Mrs. Johnson, Clair Hague and Alf. Perry. At back from left to right—Mrs. Moore, Earl Lawson, Jule Allen, Abe Wilkes, Syd Taube, Oscar Hanson, Ernie Moule, Doug Cooper, Hal Hode, Jule Allen, Sam Brint, Harry Law, Ambrose Theurer, A. J. Mason, "Pop" Phillips, Bill Summerville, Archie Laurie and Harry Painter.

## HAPPY CROWDS "CORRAL" SINGING COWBOY AT CITY HALL

Genial Gene Autry, the hard-riding, rooting, tooting cowboy, who has sung his way into the hearts of thousands of cinema fans, was literally "roped and hog-tied" by admirers when he arrived at the city hall yesterday. Gene was tendered a civic reception, during which he presented Acting Mayor Conboy with a $100 cheque for The Star Santa Claus Fund. The singing cowboy is star feature rider of the rodeo sponsored by the war services branch of the Motion Picture Pioneers, at the Coliseum. Proceeds go to the Lord Mayor's Fund.

# SINGING COWBOY HITS TOWN WITH GIFT TO SANTA FUND

### Thousands Welcome Gene Autry at City Hall Reception—Aids War Work

### HERE FOR RODEO

While the city hall square, jammed with thousands of men, women and children, re-echoed with cheers at the height of the 5 o'clock rush last night, Gene Autry was welcomed to Toronto by Acting Mayor Conboy. The cowboy singer is here to appear in the rodeo to be presented in the Coliseum starting tonight, with proceeds going to the Lord Mayor of London's Fund for war sufferers.

While Gene carried no pistols under his natty fawn coat which he wore over his cowboy outfit, he did fire one opening gun in a campaign to help underprivileged children. He presented a cheque for $100 to The Star Santa Claus Fund.

Acting Mayor Conboy accepted the cheque on behalf of the fund and it was later turned over to The Star.

Thousands of eager-eyed youngsters and a good many oldsters started crowding into city hall square soon after 3 p.m., when The Star flash-a-graph announced that Gene would be at the city hall at 4.30. A delay in Hamilton, where he encountered crowds, brought him up Bay St. behind a police motorcycle escort a few minutes after 5 p.m. and the crowd went wild.

With Mrs. Autry, Gene was met on the city hall steps by Acting Mayor Conboy and Mr. and Mrs. O. M. Hanson, and Mrs. Autry was presented with a bouquet of roses by Mrs. Hanson.

**Praises War Efforts**

"It is with deep appreciation that we welcome you on behalf of the city of Toronto," said the acting mayor. "In volunteering your services for such a worthy cause as the Lord Mayor of London's Fund you are helping to aid a great many innocent victims of the war, as the whole industry you represent has been doing since the war started."

Autry, recognized as filmdom's No. 1 cowboy, is a shy sort of fellow who went out of his way several times yesterday to talk to just plain kids when civic officials were trying to get a word in edgewise.

"I'm real disappointed that I could not have Champion (his Palomina horse) here," he told one starry-eyed youngster, "but Champ is riding here in his trailer and I guess I made better time than he did. But he'll be here in time for the show."

**Glad to Help Kids**

Informed of what his $100 would mean to needy children at Christmas, Gene said simply:

"I'm glad it will help out some kids. You know, in a world gone mad like it is today, the kids are too apt to be forgotten. They kind of get brushed out of the way when things are all topsy-turvy. I am one who can never forget that kids helped to build me up. I can understand children liking a cowboy, because that's how I got the idea to be one myself. I was born on a ranch in Tioga, Texas, and I learned to ride and rope cattle when I was a boy, because I liked to watch the hands on my father's ranch do it."

Once, however, Gene got sidetracked—right into a small railroad station in Chelsea, Okla., where he learned telegraphy. But he returned to his first love after Will Rogers heard him strumming a guitar in the station between shifts at the key to while away the time. Will Rogers told him:

"Son, I think you could make more money singin' and playin' that there guitar than you'll ever make peckin' a telegraph key."

**Followed Will's Advice**

"I realized then that the stranger who had come into the station to send a telegram was the great Will Rogers," Gene said. "I realized, too, just what his advice meant to me, and I followed it through. Kids helped to do the rest and that is why I always have time for kids. They're real people.

"That is why I like to think that no child has to go in need over Christmas. They shouldn't have to any other time. Those poor children over in England are suffering mightily right now and there is great need there. I'm glad to be able to do my little stint to help the Lord Mayor's Fund by donating my services."

Every week Gene sends out over 5,000 autographed photos. Most of these go to youngsters. He says he believes they are far better box-office barometers than adults. He prides himself on the fact that he never made a picture that a youngster wouldn't like. He doesn't smoke—not even in private life—and liquor, of course, is absolutely taboo, he says. Recently a large U.S. cigarette company wanted to pay Autry $5,000 to endorse its product. Gene refused, he said.

"It wouldn't have been a truthful endorsement," Gene said, "and anyway the kids know I don't smoke."

The rodeo will run for three nights at the Coliseum, with Gene Autry as the star. It is sponsored by the Canadian Motion Picture War Services committee.

## BEAR OF SHINY COAT SHOT NEAR WIARTON

Wiarton, Nov. 14.—Harvey Kirke, Stokes Bay, shot a 150-pound black bear in the woods near here. The animal has a fine glossy coat, Kirke reported. He plans to have the animal mounted.

Bears have worried farmers and frightened children of the district for some time.